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(19) (CA) **CANADIAN PATENT** (12)

(54) Oil Exploration Game

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

There are many patented oil exploration board games, which vary in terms of complexity and degree of interest. A relatively simple, yet interesting oil exploration game, which can be inexpensively produced includes a hollow, rectangular, preferably cardboard casing or box with an open top end, which is normally closed by a panel defining a playing surface, a plurality of contiguous rectangular play areas around the periphery of the playing surface, indicia in each such play area defining (i) a starting point, (ii) various land purchase and drilling options, (iii) rewards and (iv) punishments for landing on an area, a plurality of other rectangular play areas occupying the centre of the playing surface surrounded by the peripheral play areas, a plurality of spaced apart holes in each of the central play areas of the panel, a plurality of multi-level blocks movable on the bottom wall of the casing for indicating successful well locations, a magnet on each of the blocks, a magnetically actuated indicator for movement on the playing surface to provide an approximate location of the magnets on the blocks, and consequently of the blocks beneath the playing surface, a simulated oil derrick including a pin for insertion into the holes one at a time, play money for use by the players, a pad of score sheets for keeping score during the course of each game, a plurality of cards setting out various rewards and punishments when a player lands on selected peripheral play areas, markers for placing on the central play areas to indicate ownership thereof, pins for insertion into the holes in the

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central play areas to indicate that drilling has occurred, counters for marking the progress of a player around the periphery of the playing surface, and a die for determining the extent of each play.

This invention relates to an oil exploration game.

Oil and other exploration games have been in existence for some time. In fact, a large number of such games are described in the patent literature. Examples of patents relating to oil board games include Canadian Patent No. 1,185,998, which issued to J.R. Anthony et al on April 23, 1985, and U.S. Patents Nos. 2,299,803, which issued to C.U. Deaton on October 27, 1942; 3,061,313, which issued to S. Greene on October 30, 1962; 3,206,211, which issued to H. Koplin on September 14, 1965; 3,729,198, which issued to D.H. Shaffer on April 24, 1973; 3,801,104, which issued to R.G. Potts on April 2, 1974; 3,811,681, which issued to D.H. Sprouse et al on May 21, 1974; 3,844,567, which issued to R.L. Marker on October 29, 1974 and 4,025,075, which issued to M.T. Priska et al on May 24, 1977.

In general, the patented games are unnecessarily complicated and consequently expensive to produce, or somewhat unimaginative and consequently not capable of holding the users attention. Thus, in spite of the existence of large numbers of games of the type in question, there still exists a need for a simple, yet interesting oil exploration game.

The object of the present invention is to meet the above defined need by providing a relatively simple oil exploration game, which can be inexpensively produced, and which is relatively interesting to play.

Accordingly, the present invention relates to an oil



exploration game comprising hollow, rectangular casing means;
top panel means closing the open top end of said casing means
and defining a playing surface; a plurality of first, contiguous
play areas around the periphery of said playing surface; indicia
5 in each said play area, said indicia defining (a) a starting
point, (b) various land purchase and drilling options, (c) rewards
and (d) punishments for landing on the area; a plurality of
second contiguous play areas occupying the area of the playing
surface surrounded by the first play areas; a plurality of spaced
10 apart holes in each said second play area of the panel means;
a plurality of block means movably mounted in said casing means
for indicating successful well locations and the quality thereof;
magnet means carried by at least some of said block means; magnetic-
ally actuated indicator means for movement on the playing surface
15 to provide an approximate location of said magnet means and
consequently of said block means beneath said playing surface;
simulated oil derrick means for insertion into said holes one
at a time; play money for use by the players; and score sheet
means for keeping score and other records during the course
20 of each game.

The invention will be described in greater detail with
reference to the accompanying drawings which illustrate a preferred
embodiment of the invention, and wherein:

Figure 1 is a schematic, exploded perspective view
25 of an oil exploration game in accordance with the present invention.

Figure 2 is a plan view of one end of a game board used in the game of Fig. 1; and

Figure 3 is a plan view of a score sheet used in the game of Fig. 1.

5 With reference to Fig. 1, the oil exploration game of the present invention includes a rectangular casing generally indicated at 1. The casing 1 is defined by a box 2 including a bottom wall 4, side walls 5, end walls 6, and an open top end 7, which is normally closed by a rectangular panel 8. A
10 rectangular ledge 9 extends around the interior of the periphery of the box 2 for supporting the panel 8. The box 2, the panel 8 and the ledge 9 can all be formed of cardboard which simplifies production and reduces the cost of the basic components of the game.

15 A plurality of blocks 10 are placed in the box 2 for free movement on the bottom wall 4 thereof. Each of the blocks 10 is defined by irregularly shaped bottom and top layers 12 and 13, respectively which are formed of plastic or another inexpensive material. The blocks 10 may have an additional
20 layer (not shown). A magnet 14 is mounted in some of the top layers 13. The blocks 10 are intended to provide an indication of successful wells and the quality thereof, i.e. the presence of oil or gas.

25 The panel 8 normally rests on the shoulder 9 above the blocks 10. A simulated seismic exploration device 16 can be moved around the top, playing surface 18 of the panel 8 for

determining the approximate locations of the blocks 10. The device 16 is defined by a small, parallelopipedic casing 19 with a transparent cover 20 on the top thereof and iron filings 21 or another material which reacts to a magnetic field in the casing. In use, the iron filings 21 or other material should initially be more or less uniformly distributed to ensure the most accurate indication of the locations of blocks 10 beneath the panel 8.

The other elements of the game include a simulated oil derrick 23 defined by a derrick shaped body 24 and a pin 25 slidably mounted in the body, a plurality of counters 27 for marking the progress of each player around the periphery of the playing surface 18, a plurality of disc-shaped property markers 28, play money 30, reward and penalty cards 31 and 32, respectively, a pad of score sheets 34, a plurality of pins (not shown) with black, red, blue and yellow plastic heads, and a conventional die (not shown).

Referring to Fig. 2 of the drawing, the playing surface 18 of the panel 8 is divided by longitudinally and transversely extending lines into a plurality of rectangular play areas 35 and 36. Each of the large areas 35 on the central area of the playing surface 18 contain a map of a position of the world, and is subdivided into nine smaller areas 37. The maps illustrate and are labelled "Australia", "South America", "Midwest/USA/Gulf Coast", "Middle East", "Western Canada" and "United Kingdom/North Sea". Each area 37 includes five small holes 39 spaced equidistance apart for receiving the pin 25 of the derrick 23, and subsequently

one of the pins with a coloured head. Each of the areas 36 on the periphery of the playing surface 18 contains indicia setting out exploration or drilling options, or instructing the player to pick one of the reward or punishment cards 31 or 32, respectively

5 which are entitled "Windfall" and "Hazard", respectively.

A square 40 at one corner of the playing surface 18 is entitled "Year End". This square represents the starting point. Going around the playing surface in a clockwise direction, the next corner 41 is entitled "Hazard", which instructs the

10 player landing on this square to pick up a hazard card 32. The intervening areas 37 between the corners 40 and 41 read as follows:

1st Quarter Budget

May spend up to \$2,000,000; Maximum 2 wells; \$1,000,000/well;
Maximum seismic 2 parcels; \$500,000/parcel.

15 Seismic Option

May seismic 1 parcel of land; Cost \$1,000,000; May purchase same parcel; Cost \$2,000,000.

Windfall

Seismic

20 May seismic up to 4 parcels of land; Cost \$500,000/parcel.

Drilling

May drill up to 4 wells; Cost \$1,500,000/well.

Crown Land Sale

May post 1 parcel of land for bid.

25 The next corner 42 (Fig. 1) in the clockwise direction reads as follows:

Wildcat

May drill 2 wells on any unowned land; Cost \$3,500,000; Retain parcel & points when disclosed at year end if well is successful.

The intervening areas 37 read as follows:

5 2nd Quarter Budget

May spend up to \$3,000,000; Maximum 3 wells; \$1,000,000/well; Maximum seismic 4 parcels; \$500,000/parcel.

Wildcat

May drill 1 well; Cost \$4,000,000.

10 WindfallTriple Option

Drill 1 well; Cost \$1,000,000 or seismic 2 parcels; Cost \$500,000/parcel or post 1 parcel for bid.

Freehold

15 May purchase up to 2 parcels of land; Cost \$1,000,000/parcel.

Drilling

May drill up to 4 wells; Cost \$1,000,000/well.

HazardCrown Land Sale

20 May post up to 2 parcels of land for bid.

Seismic

May seismic up to 2 parcels of land; Cost \$500,000/parcel.

The next corner 43 (Fig. 1) in the clockwise direction reads "Windfall", and the areas 37 between the corner squares

25 42 and 43 read as follows:

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3rd Quarter Budget

May spend up to \$4,000,000; Maximum 2 wells; \$1,500,000/well;
Maximum seismic 4 parcels of land; \$500,000/parcel.

Lease Expiry

- 5 Player must forfeit 1 parcel of land unless every parcel has
a producing well.

Windfall

Drilling

May drill up to 3 wells; Cost \$1,500,000/well.

10 Crown Land Sales

May post up to 2 parcels of land for bid.

Seismic

May seismic up to 3 parcels of land; Cost \$500,000/parcel.

- 15 The areas 37 between the "Windfall" corner square 43
and the "Year End" corner 39 read as follows:

4th Quarter Budget

May spend up to \$4,000,000; Maximum 2 wells; \$1,500,000/well;
Maximum seismic 4 parcels of land; \$500,000/parcel.

Drilling

- 20 May drill up to 6 wells; Cost \$1,000,000/well.

Hazard

Freehold

May purchase up to 2 parcels of land; Cost \$1,500,000/parcel.

Wildcat

- 25 May drill 1 well; Cost \$5,000,000.

Windfall

Crown Land Sale

May post up to 3 parcels of land for bid.

Drilling

May drill up to 3 wells; Cost \$1,500,000/well.

5 Lease Expiry

Player must forfeit 1 parcel of land unless every parcel of player's land has a successful well.

A player whose counter 27 lands on one of the windfall areas must take a windfall card 31 from the stack of such cards.

10 The windfall cards contain the following instructions:

. U.S. Freehold land allocation, select any unowned land and parcel in Midwest U.S.A. free.

15 free.

. Large scale drilling program results in reduced costs. May drill 1 free well (with no undrilled location between it and an already drilled location) in the Middle East.

20 petroleum revenue tax. Collect \$1,500,000 if you have wells in the U.K.

. Canadian royalties have been reduced. Collect \$1,000,000 for each super oil well in Western Canada.

25 \$10,000,000.

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. Low activity & competitive bidding in the U.S. has reduced drilling costs. You may drill 2 wells in the Midwest U.S. Cost \$100,000/well.

. This winter was extremely severe and fuel consumption was high. Collect double your annual income at year end. (Retain
5 card until year end.)

. The Australian government has announced a frontier lands incentive program. You may drill 1 free wildcat well on any unowned and unseismiced parcel in Australia.

. The Canadian government has announced a job creating
10 program. You may reduce your next drilling costs to \$500,000/well. (Retain card until you drill.)

. It is your option! You may purchase 1 parcel or drill 1 well or conduct seismic on 2 parcels in the Middle East. Cost \$1,000,000.

15 . You have successfully stimulated a well. You may double the points for an average oil or gas well.

. The U.K. government is giving tax credits for exploration. Collect \$500,000 for every dry hole you have drilled in the United Kingdom.

20 . The South American government is promoting your investment. Drill 1 free wildcat in South America.

. South American crown land allocation - select any unowned land parcel in South America at no cost.

. Short term increase in production quotas - collect
25 \$100,000 for each oil well and \$200,000 for each gas well.

. Are you running short of time? Roll again or drill
1 free well.

. A recent increase in Middle East tension has caused
an increase in oil price. Collect \$200,000 for each oil point
5 you have attained.

Similarly, when a player's counter 27 lands on a hazard
play area, the player is required to take a hazard card 32. The
instructions on the hazard cards are as follows:

. All productive wells require servicing. Pay \$100,000
10 per well.

. A junior engineer gets pipe cemented in a gas well.
Pay \$100,000 & remove 1 gas well. (This well may be redrilled
later.)

. Your company is subject to a takeover bid. You may
15 not spend more than \$3,000,000 during your next 2 turns. (Retain
card for 2 turns.)

. Your entire seismic crew has ended up with food poison-
ing. You may not conduct seismic for 3 turns. (Retain card for
3 turns.)

20 . Your best gas well has started to produce significant
quantities of oil. If you have a "super" gas well, change it
to an average oil well and adjust points accordingly.

. Two of your super oil wells have started to produce
a large amount of water. Change 2 super oil wells to dry holes.

25 . An earthquake destroys 2 wells in South America.
Remove any 2 wells from South America & reduce points accordingly.
(These wells may be redrilled later.)

. You have over extended your budget. Transfer ownership of 1 land parcel (with at least 1 successful well on it) to other player with fewest total points. (In a tie, player with lowest cash on hand.)

- 5 . Due to a shortage of seismic crews you are not allowed to run seismic for 2 turns. (Retain card for 2 turns.)

. U.S. government announces new energy policy which contains new excise tax, pay \$200,000 per producing well in Western United States.

- 10 . Due to a shortage of drilling rigs you may not drill for 1 turn. (Retain card for 1 turn.)

. A pipeline company which you depend upon has had a pipeline failure. Pay \$2,000,000 at year end for additional transportation expenses. (Retain card until year end.)

- 15 . You have an oil spill in the Canadian north. Pay \$2,000,000 for damages if you own land in Western Canada.

. Two of your best wells were destroyed in the Middle East war. Remove two super (oil or gas) wells. If you have too few super wells, remove average wells.

- 20 . OPEC is flooding market with excess oil & the price is collapsing. Receive only 50% of your calculated income at year end. (Retain card until year end.)

. You have been audited by government & your books are not up to par. Pay \$4,000,000 in back taxes.

- 25 . Excessive rain prohibits transportation of your drilling rig. You may not drill for 2 turns. (Retain card for 2 turns.)

. A typhoon in Australia destroys a production platform.
Remove 4 offshore wells in Australia.

. You have had a blowout in the United Kingdom/North
Sea. Remove 1 gas well from this area. (Well may be redrilled
5 later.)

The remaining elements of the game include small crowns
44 (Fig. 1) for indicating parcels of land posted for sale during
a government land sale.

With reference to Figure 3, each score sheet 34 includes
10 a main title 45 at the top centre of the sheet, and instructions
46 for calculating scoring. Columns 48 and 49 are provided beneath
the instructions 46 for maintaining a record of points and bids
made on land, i.e. play areas 36 on the central area of the playing
surface 18. The right hand side of the score sheet 34 includes
15 a title "Calculation of Annual Income", instructions for calcu-
lating income, and columns of squares 52 for maintaining seismic
records. The number and arrangement of the squares 52 are equal
or similar to the number and arrangement of the play areas 36
to facilitate the accurate keeping of records.

20 The rules of play for the game are generally as follows:

The game is a model of the daily events in the exploration
department of an oil and gas company. No previous knowledge of
the oil and gas industry is required, and players of twelve years
of age and older can easily learn the game. The game is intended
25 for from two to eight players. The player who first obtains
twenty-five points for successful oil wells and twenty-five points
for successful gas wells is the winner. The manner of obtaining

points is described hereinafter and on the score sheet 34. Success in the game requires good financial management, timely land purchases, good use of confidential information and an occasional misleading bluff to side track opponents.

5 As described hereinbefore, the areas 37 in the middle of the playing surface 18 of the panel 8 define fifty-four parcels, each of which includes five drillable locations defined by the holes 39. The middle hole 39 is designated as a potential gas well, while the four corner holes 39 in each parcel are designated
10 as potential oil wells. Each player indicates ownership by placing markers 28 of the same colour as their counter 27 on the parcel which they own. The areas 36 on the perimeter of the board dictate when land can be purchased. The two methods of purchasing land are set out in the play areas 36, and include government land
15 sales and freehold land sales. During government land sales, a player may post a parcel or parcels of land for bidding. Posted parcels are designated by placing a crown 44 on them. All players may bid by recording a bid on their score sheet. The bids are in multiples of \$100,000, and in the event of a tie the tied
20 players bid again. The highest bidder obtains the right to drill (mineral rights) and indicates ownership of the parcel. If more than one parcel of land is posted, bids are recorded for each parcel before any bids are declared. The price of the various parcels of land are specified on the board for freehold land
25 sales.

When using the so-called seismic exploration device 16, it is important to ensure that the filings in the device

are well distributed, so that no indications of oil and gas pools are missed. It is important to note that the seismic device merely provides an indication of the general location of three quarters of the pools, and that drilling is required to locate the remaining pools and to determine the size, shape and orientation of such pools. The square 52 on the score sheet 34 enable each player to maintain a record of which player surveys which parcel of land. This information is invaluable when making land bids. Each player should attempt to obtain the land surrounding several discoveries. Seismic exploration is essential, because most of the well locations on the entire playing surface 18 would be unsuccessful.

A player can drill on his or her own land only, unless drilling a wildcat well. A simulated derrick or drilling rig 24 is placed over one of the openings 39, and the pin 25 is slid downwardly through the opening to determine whether any of the blocks 10 is located beneath the playing surface. If the pin can be inserted fully into the derrick, then the well is dry. If the pin stops before full insertion, i.e. if the bottom of the pin strikes the bottom layer 12 of a block 10, than an "average" well has been drilled. If the pin cannot be inserted beyond the bottom of a hole 39, i.e. if the pin encounters a top layer 13 of a block 10, than a "super" well has been drilled. Successful drilling is rewarded as follows:

25		<u>Oilwell</u>	<u>Gaswell</u>	
	Super	2	7	(marked by a red pin)
	Average	1	3	(marked by a blue pin)
	Dry	0	0	(marked by a yellow pin)

As per instructions found in the play areas 36, a player may drill confidential wells (wildcats). Such wells are useful when making land bids or purchases. Confidential wells are drilled by shielding the rig and/or the rig pin with a hand. When drilling

5 a confidential well, the player marks the position of the well on the playing surface using a black pin and must declare the result and obtain any points when passing the square 40 "year end" at the starting position of the game. A wildcat is drilled on unowned land and, if the well is successful, the land is retained.

10 Other players may not drill on a parcel with a wildcat well until the well has been declared unsuccessful and the parcel is forfeited.

Each player receives an annual income at the "year end" square 40 which increases as oil well and gas well points are obtained. A player's annual income is determined as follows:

15 $\text{Annual Income} = \$1,000,000 + (\text{oil points} + \text{gas points}) \times \$500,000.$

If more than two players are involved in a game, partnerships may be formed. If more than four players are involved, partnerships are necessary. A partnership takes the turn of a single player. Partnerships add a dimension of discussion,

20 sharing of confidential information and enjoyment to the game.

Before a game is started, all players should be familiar with the blocks 10, and test or be familiar with the operation of the seismic exploration device 16. It is preferable that a non-participant randomly place the blocks 10 in the casing

25 1. Alternatively, the game can be placed on a flat surface and moved rapidly to randomly locate the blocks 10. Each player

starts the game with \$25,000,000. The player with the highest roll of the die begins the game by choosing one land parcel free, and by conducting a seismic survey of one land parcel free. When each player has completed the first turn, play proceeds clockwise
5 around the board starting with the first player. A winner is declared when it is confirmed that a player has obtained twenty-five points for oil wells and twenty-five points for gas wells.

Each player starts with limited resources and finite opportunities. The challenge of the game is managing financial
10 resources such that the player can capitalize on wildcat and seismic information. Land purchases and bids should be based on such information. Players should also use their intuition in assessing the activities and bids of other players. With certain land posting and wildcats, players will find that they
15 may bluff other players.

General rules of play include that a player may not borrow from the bank or other players, and may go into debt only if forced to do so by a "Hazard" card 32. Except with a partner, players may not combine, trade, sell or share land parcels
20 36 or wells with other players. A player must decide and declare what he or she intends to do at the beginning of each turn. For example, if permitted to drill up to six wells, the player must decide how many to drill before proceeding.

25

THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. An oil exploration game comprising hollow, rectangular casing means; top panel means closing the open top end of said casing means and defining a playing surface; a plurality of first, contiguous play areas around the periphery of said playing surface; indicia in each said play area, said indicia defining (a) a starting point, (b) various land purchase and drilling options, (c) rewards and (d) punishments for landing on the area; a plurality of second contiguous play areas occupying the area of the playing surface surrounded by the first play areas; a plurality of spaced apart holes in each said second play area of the panel means; a plurality of block means movably mounted in said casing means for indicating successful well locations and the quality thereof; magnet means carried by at least some of said block means; magnetically actuated indicator means for movement on the playing surface to provide an approximate location of said magnet means and consequently of said block means beneath said playing surface; simulated oil derrick means for insertion into said holes one at a time; play money for use by the players; and score sheet means for keeping score during the course of each game.

2. A game according to claim 1, including a plurality of card means setting out various rewards and punishments when a player lands on selected of said first play areas.

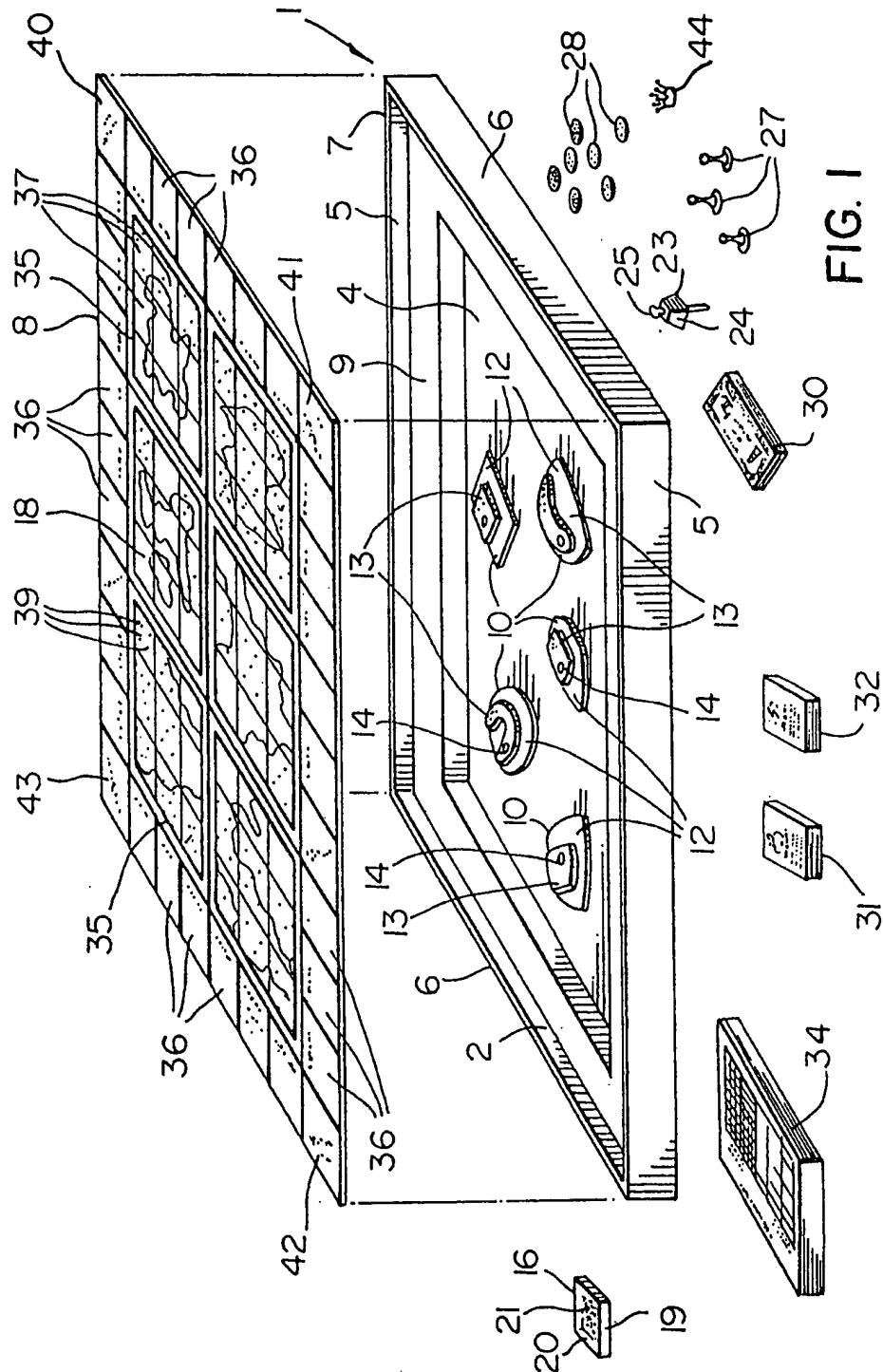
3. A game according to claim 1, including marker means for placing on said second play areas to indicate ownership

thereof; and pin means for insertion into said holes in said second play areas to indicate that drilling has occurred.

4. A game according to claim 3, wherein each said block means includes a bottom layer for sliding on the bottom wall of said casing means, and at least one smaller top layer.

5. A game according to claim 4, wherein said indicator means includes a small casing for sliding on the playing surface, a transparent cover on said casing, and metal filings in said casing for attraction by said magnet means, so that movement of said filings in said casing means is indicative of the presence of a block means beneath said top panel means in close proximity to the indicator means.





George H. Munsmuir

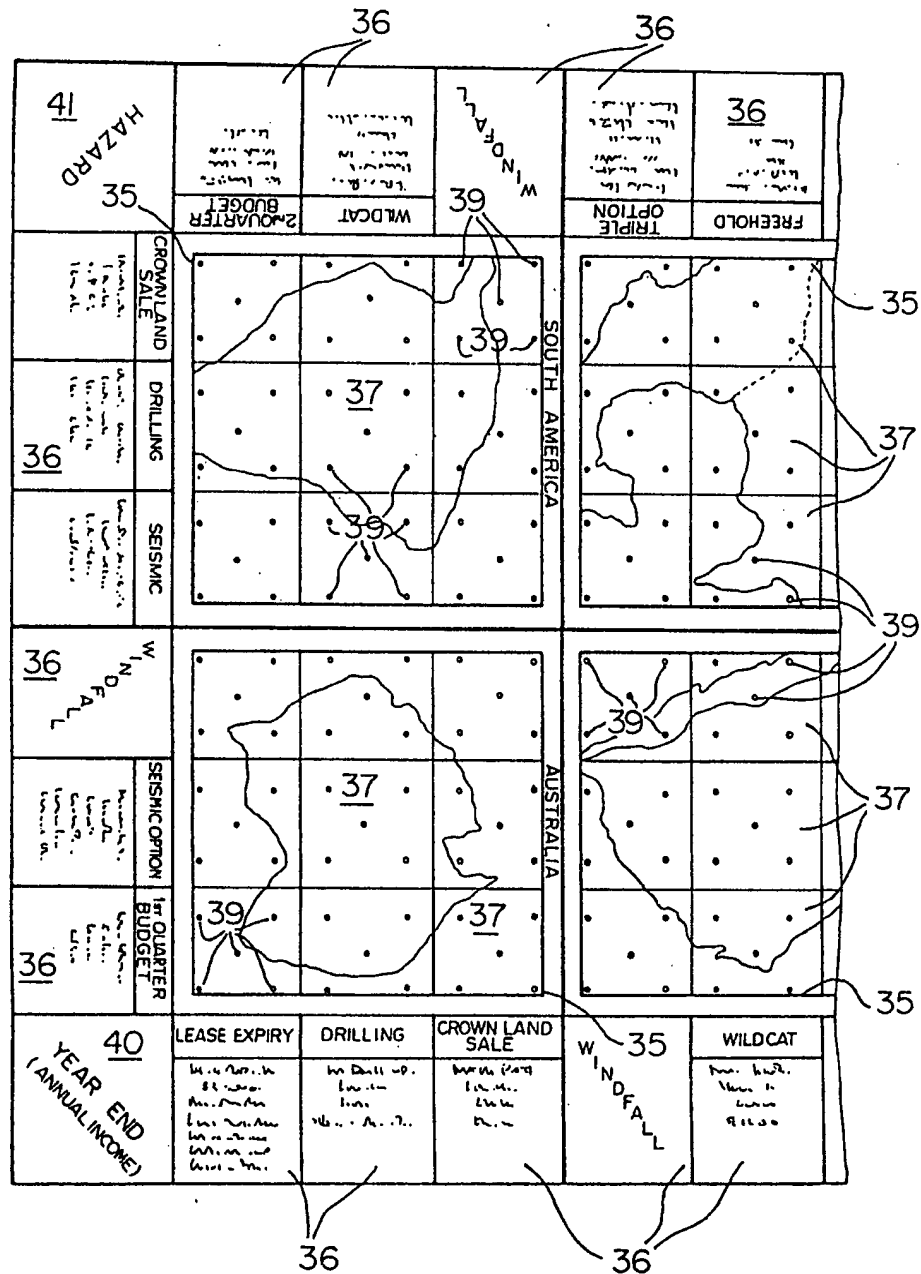


FIG. 2

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